



Rushey Green Time Bank

Annual Review 2018/19





A word from the Chair Roy Witter

I am extremely proud to present this Annual review which, being familiar with the breadth of the charity's work, only represents a snapshot of its numerous activities.

Rushey Green Time Bank is staggering in its diversity, numbers of people involved and the tangible outcomes that bring joy to people, encourages volunteering and reduces isolation. Social prescribing? Absolutely! Encouraging, inspiring and supporting people to belong is at the heart of Rushey Green Time Bank.

As the organisation expands and adopts its new role of Voluntary Sector infrastructure support in Lewisham, we will aim to emulate that same sense of feeling inspired, informed, connected and supported, for our partners and friends to help realise their ambition for our community.

Finally, and not least, I would like to thank our amazing and passionate team goes beyond the call of duty, and regularly avails itself at evenings and weekends to be of service to others and the organisation.

Well done and thank you!

A word from the CEO Philippe Granger

The charity thrives on its can-do approach that enables it to take on ideas and visualise ever-greater prospects.

The charity has experienced considerable growth and has continued to diversify its portfolio of projects tailored to the needs and aspirations of the community it seeks to serve. There has been greater participation from its service users, which inspired by a compelling vision of community and



wanting to make a difference, want to get involved in activities that are meaningful to them, and feel connected. The charity performed 9,917 hours of volunteering and this trend is likely to continue as new opportunities are available for local people to get involved.

Onwards we go!

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF RGTB

The charity celebrated its 20th year anniversary party in a beautifully decorated St Laurence Centre.

The event included stalls from all the charity's projects, a buffet, an anniversary cake, speeches and special performances by a Time Bank choir which had been formed specifically for this event. In addition, poems were received from the Creatives Group and music by 'Feeling the Noise' which is a band made up of partially-sighted musicians. A commemorative booklet was designed and printed to mark the anniversary, with photos of members from the last 20 years.

OUR WORK

FOODCYCLE LEWISHAM



FoodCycle Lewisham, a project operated by the charity, provides a community meal every Saturday at the Lewisham Irish Community Centre. The project is powered by volunteers and exists to reduce food poverty, food waste and loneliness. It operates as a franchise of FoodCycle, the national charity that runs 39 vegetarian community meals throughout the country using surplus food.

Loneliness has a huge impact on people's mental and physical health and this project provides a space where isolated local people on low incomes can come to enjoy a free hot meal once a week. The service users are our 'guests' and the project, now in its third year, has become a community of its own. Some 45% of the guests live on their own; 68% have said that they often feel lonely; 45% use a food bank; 59% regularly skip meals. Saturday is therefore a very precious time for the guests; thanks also to our dedicated Volunteers who provide a welcoming environment and creating delicious meals each week.

Guests' feedback

- 94% said they looked forward to coming
- 82% have tried new types of food at the meal and had eaten more fruit and vegetables
- 82% agreed they have met new friends since coming to the meal and have met people from different backgrounds
- 79% feel more connected to their local community since coming to the meal

The number of guests has risen to welcoming on average 43 guests per week and above 50 on some occasions. During this year, FoodCycle Lewisham hosted 2,154 guests, a 38% increase on last year. Some 3,390 meals were served and 3,690 kilos of surplus food were saved from going to waste.



'I have enjoyed the social aspect and made friends. It has given me something to do and has reduced my social isolation'



WILD CAT WILDERNESS

'I think the connection with other people and the community should have another 'off the scale' box to tick! The atmosphere here encourages friendships to form and for participants to seek out other community activities/ opportunities'

WCW is our community green space in Catford. It is a natural wilderness that local residents are invited to help shape and use as a community space. The site is used and enjoyed 5-6 days a week including 170 children from 2 primary schools and 3 nursery schools attending weekly. We have also worked with a wide range of other local organisations and charities including the Youth Offending Team, Lewisham Good Gym, Signal, National Citizenship Scheme, Sunday Assembly London, LSE, corporate volunteers, police cadets and the Orchard Project – all this has strengthened our links within the local community and further afield.

We have hosted events, festivals and activities as part of the Capital Growth Big Dig, The Urban Food Fortnight Urban Harvest Festival, the RSPB Garden Bird Watch and Eden Communities Big Lunch picnic and The Catford Arts Trail. Other groups are also allowed to use the Wilderness such as the woodcraft folk, scouts and CGL to run their own activities and to fulfil a need, which means WCW is seen as a real community asset. It is a real oasis in an urban area and many people derive benefit from volunteering and visiting the site. Over 1100 individuals have benefited and over 100 dedicated volunteer sessions were organised. Volunteers have had training in permaculture, edible plants, fruit pruning and orchard care.



Highlights from annual survey

- 50% of adults participating come to Wilderness to be physically active
- 59% stated the reason they come is to meet other people
- 76% have met neighbours and other local people
- 67% have made friends and feel less isolated
- 94% feel more connected to the local community
- 76% feel in better physical health
- 88% feel in better mental health
- 87.5% feel happier, 76% less stressed, 60% feel more confident
- 87% of young people have a better understanding of the value of nature
- 81% stated they have learnt new skills or improved existing ones
- 94% have gained more knowledge of nature conservation

'Being part of a group is great, good for mental health, especially in a natural environment'



**9,917 HOURS
GIVEN**



(April 18 - Mar 19)

TIME BANKING HIGHLIGHTS

The charity and its members run several different groups to get involved, be connected, become active and learn. These consist of Tea & Chat crafts group, the Walking group, Glassmills Group chat and the Bellingham Arts & Crafts group.

Members also run a 'Time bank Creatives' group that meets once a month to share creative work and plan public events where those participating can share their artistic talent in front of an audience.

A Members Action Group meets monthly to plan and coordinate developments of time banking activities and establish priorities and areas of work to focus on. This year they worked on:

- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all time bank members
- Equip members with knowledge and resources to be able to easily communicate what Rushey Green Time Bank does and how people can get involved
- Create more opportunities to learn and share sewing, craft and DIY skills

This has also led to the creation of information sheets about the Action Group and the benefits of joining the Time Bank to encourage people to get involved, as well as an events board and member-led workshops including dressmaking and sewing.

Bring & Fix, instigated by Rushey Green time Bank in 2011, gets people together in a public space to share their skills and knowledge, repairing things for others thus making a contribution to recycle and reduce waste. There were three Bring & Fix events this year that provided services like Leather Repair, General D.I.Y, Wills & Probate advice, IT technologies, mobile phone support, toggles and shoelace repairs and sewing, fixing or servicing bikes, buggies and wheelchairs. + PHOTOS

A Gardening/DIY Club was set up to deal with a high number of gardening/DIY requests from Time Bank members who could no longer maintain their gardens or do the small DIY jobs due to limited mobility or ill health. Garden buddies were recruited and were seen out and about mowing lawns, weeding, sweeping, cutting down low hanging branches and cutting back brambles and bushes. DIY helpers also provided services for members needing practical home help

Festivals - the charity has always had a presence at local festivals such as Lewisham People's Day and the Bellingham festival, giving an opportunity for members and staff to showcase the charity's work. This year we were also at the Blythe Hill Festival

showcasing our Lewisham FoodCycle project. We also collaborated with the Catford Community Association to host their Food 'N' Fun in the Fields festival in Ladywell fields. The charity provided gazebos, high visibility vests and radios to support volunteers on the day, as well as additional support for set up and stewarding.



PARTNERSHIP WITH MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

'Macmillan and Time Bank is a match made in necessity, in heaven as far as I'm concerned. Without it, my life would be far more limited and difficult than it need be.'

Macmillan Cancer Support approached the charity to collaborate on a pilot project in order to test how time banking can support people affected by cancer in Lewisham. The aim was to engage people who may not traditionally volunteer or engage in their services, but to give and receive time and skills and thus feel more helped, encouraged and empowered. The project originally planned as a three-month pilot was launched on Macmillan's Coffee Morning with 44 people attending. The project has involved a monthly drop-in for people affected by cancer, held at the Rushey Green Group Practice and supported by a member of the Macmillan team as well as Time Bank staff to facilitate the sessions.

The initial evaluation carried out by Macmillan found that time banking has a positive effect on people affected by cancer. It was decided that a project extension was needed to further test the model and the monthly drop-ins have continued in 2019.

The initial evaluation has revealed that 100% attendees feel isolated and they find that time banking has a positive effect on people affected by cancer. They have found that their peer support network as widened as a direct result of the drop-ins, that they know where to go for support and that the partnership is a good addition to the service.

LEWISHAM LOCAL

The charity hosts Lewisham Local and continues to play a pivotal role in the development of this cross-sector initiative, bringing together the voluntary and public sector, local businesses and communities to inspire and mobilise people to give towards good causes in Lewisham. Oversight of the initiative also involves a strategic Collaborative of partners including Lewisham Council, Goldsmiths University of London, South East London Chamber of Commerce, Deptford Challenge Trust, Lewisham Education Arts Network and Voluntary Action Lewisham. Lewisham Local is also part of a growing networking of 'place-based giving' initiatives across London called London's Giving co-ordinated by London Funders.



LEWISHAM LOCAL COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR CARDS are given to local volunteers who give their time for free. Local businesses offer discounts and deals to thank the volunteers for what they do in the community. We have worked with over 200 community groups to recognise volunteers, recruited 349 local independent businesses to offer discounts and distributed over 5,000 cards.

LEWISHAM COMMUNITY TOILETS scheme is commissioned by Lewisham Council as an alternative to public toilets that have been closed. We have recruited local businesses willing to offer the public free access to use their toilets and there are now 61 Community Toilets available in Lewisham. The scheme continues to grow in public consciousness and appears to be generally well received by the public.



REFILL LEWISHAM - following our successful work developing a network of community minded business, the Greater London Authority (GLA) approached Lewisham Local to trial a network of local businesses that would offer free water refills to help reduce single-use plastic waste. There are now 100 businesses offering free water refills.

LEWISHAM LOCAL TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

With the expansion of our network across numerous initiatives, local professional businesses started to show more of an interest in being involved. We have sought to connect their skills and expertise with local good causes. Lewisham Local has developed skills-sharing workshops where local businesses offer short practical training to local charities and other businesses as a way of giving to the community.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- Successful renewal of the Mayor's Awards, working in partnership with Lewisham Council to reward, recognise and promote local volunteering
- Close working with Goldsmiths University students on volunteering, placements and internships to help develop and grow Lewisham Local's network
- Involvement in London's Giving, contributing our experience and expertise gathered with other place-based giving schemes across London.



LEWISHAM CONNECTIONS

The charity is a partner of the Lewisham Connections consortium led by Age UK. Community Connections is a preventative programme aimed at supporting vulnerable adults to improve their social integration and wellbeing. Community Facilitators support vulnerable adults through person-centred planning and signposting clients to the relevant community groups and statutory services in their local area. Community Development Workers support community groups to build their capacity and so as to be better able to take on referrals.

The Community Connections team is also involved in the Neighbourhood Development Partnership (NCDP) between community development workers, organisations and other key stakeholders at a neighbourhood level, facilitating a joined-up approach to the development of community-based care. NCDPs identify resources within communities to maximize community potential while also highlighting gaps in service provision and networking to develop services to meet those needs. This has become a key element of community development in Lewisham, and underpinning collaboration at neighbourhood level

The charity hosts a lead Development worker who has contributed to 363 development visits to community organisations and support of 40 organisations provided by the Community Connections team.



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The core value of 'Repair, Reuse, and Recycle' is principal to the workings of the charity. The charity aims to use recycle products and avoid plastic. Some items are re-purposed at the Wild Cat wilderness and for the arts and crafts sessions. People are also asked to donate surplus items like tools and equipment. Service users have also attended in-house workshops to inform them about saving energy. Bring and Fix sessions for the community this year introduced a Sewing Surgery for people to have their clothes mended for free by other members of the community. Under the Lewisham Local initiative, the charity has taken the lead to promote free water refills to in Lewisham to reduce the use of plastic. Over 100 businesses have signed up to the scheme.

THE FUTURE

'Getting involved' and volunteering are trademarks of the organisation and the charity is responding to the recommendation of the 2017 Lewisham Poverty Commission report that highlights the benefits of volunteering and the need to tackle poverty. The charity submitted a grant application to Lewisham Council to scale up the charity's work to further encourage volunteering, generate greater public engagement and cross-sector collaboration between organisations to make the voluntary sector more resilient in a challenging environment. The aim is to inspire the Borough's residents to get involved and be better disposed to respond to the needs of the community by developing Lewisham Local as an infrastructure offer to help grow a network of businesses, organisations and individuals to share assets and resources across Lewisham. The charity will seek and support programmes that place an emphasis on connections and the sharing of resources to mobilise people to tackle local issues.

THANK YOU

This work wouldn't happen without our principal funders - The London Borough of Lewisham, the City Bridge Trust, The Merchant Taylors Company, and other funding streams from the Rushey Green Ward Assemblies, The Prudential, The Co-operative Community Fund, Tesco and the various fundraising activities undertaken by dedicated volunteers.

FINANCE

Our trading figures for 2018/19 show an income of £265,360 and an expenditure of £279,577, net assets at 31/03/19 were £120,739 made up of £28,030 restricted funds and £92,709 unrestricted funds. Full accounts are included in our Annual Report, submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission. They are also posted on our website and copies are available on request.





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